

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS

OF

PENNSYLVANIA,

FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR ENDING JUNE 1, 1850.

BY A. L. RUSSELL, SUPERINTENDENT.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
Harrisburg, January 6, 1851. }

To His Excellency, WILLIAM F. JOHNSTON,
Governor of Pennsylvania:

SIR:—In pursuance of the act of Assembly, I have the honor herewith to deliver to you the report of the Superintendent of Common Schools, for the year ending June, 1850.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully

Your obedient servant,

A. L. RUSSELL,

Secretary of Commonwealth and Superintendent of Common Schools.

REPORT.

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, SCHOOL DEPARTMENT,
Harrisburg, January 6, 1851. }

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

GENTLEMEN:—In compliance with the provision contained in the 31st section of the act of 7th April, 1849, revising and consolidating the several acts of the Legislature relating to common schools, I have the honor to submit the following report for the school year ending on the first Monday of June last:

To furnish every child in the Commonwealth with suitable elementary instruction, and thus prepare him for citizenship by teaching him to understand his rights and intelligently to discharge his duty; to develop the sensibilities of his nature and stimulate the faculties of his mind; to promote noble and elevated thought, is the purpose of that momentous element of modern society, the common school system. "Wisdom and virtue are qualities which, because they descend not with worldly inheritances, must be carefully propagated by a virtuous education of youth."

Such was the sentiment, in 1682, of the illustrious founder, the first eminent law-giver of our State, incorporated in his "Frame of Government," or first constitution of Pennsylvania. Although the principle and importance of universal education were thus authoritatively recognized at the earliest period of her history, no system of popular instruction in this Commonwealth, was attempted, no common school fund established, until the second day of April, 1831.

By an act of the Legislature of that date, entitled "An Act providing for a general system of education," certain moneys arising from the sale of lands and other sources, were set apart as a common school fund, at an interest of five per cent. The interest was directed to be added to the principal until the proceeds thereof should amount to one hundred thousand dollars annually, when the whole was to be applied to the use of common schools.

By an act, approved the first day of April, 1834, the State was divided into districts, and the sum of seventy-five thousand dollars was ordered to be paid out of the school fund for the year 1835, and annually thereafter, to be distributed among the several counties that should be entitled to receive it, by complying with the provisions of said act, until the year when the school fund should yield an interest of one hundred thousand dollars annually. Provision was also made by this law for levying a tax in the districts *not less than double* the amount of the appropriation received from the State.

The act of 13th June, 1836, appropriated the sum of two hundred thousand dol-

lars for the year 1837, and annually thereafter, to be apportioned among the several school districts of the Commonwealth, and the city and county of Philadelphia, and authorized the levying of a tax *not less than equal to, nor more than treble* the amount of each district's proportion of the State appropriation under this act. It also designated the first Monday of June as the termination of each school year thereafter. The entire appropriation was required to remain in the State Treasury, subject to the drafts of the Superintendent, instead of being deposited in the county treasuries.

By resolution of April 26, 1837, the sum of five hundred thousand dollars was appropriated to the common school fund for the year 1838, "to be applied by the several districts either for building, repairing, or purchasing school houses, or for education, as they might deem best."

On the 12th April, 1838, the appropriation was increased to a sum *equal to one dollar* for every taxable inhabitant in the State, to be increased triennially, with the increase of inhabitants, so as always to equal one dollar for each taxable, but without any increase of taxation above that authorized by the act of 1836.

Various acts, resolutions, and supplements were subsequently passed by the Legislature, not, however, materially changing any of the important features of the law regulating the system, until, by the act of 11th April, 1848, it was made to embrace every county in the Commonwealth. Provision was also made by this act for the payment to those districts from which the undrawn appropriations were taken, by the act of 29th April, 1844, of the *one-fourth* of the State tax levied in such districts, to be applied exclusively to the erection of school houses therein.

The act of 1849, revising and consolidating all the acts of former Legislatures, relating to common schools, effected many valuable improvements in the system, and greatly simplified the law.

Since, and including the year 1844, the annual appropriation by the State for the support of schools, has been two hundred thousand dollars.

The foregoing synopsis of Legislative action in this State on this interesting subject, is confined chiefly to that portion of her enactments creating and providing a *fund* as the basis of the whole system of common schools.

The following exhibit, prepared with much care from the reports of the district directors, affords a condensed view of the operation of the system for the year ending June 1, 1850. It is, however, deeply to be regretted that these reports are made to the department, in many instances, in a form so vague and unintelligible, that no compilation thereof can be relied on as furnishing information strictly accurate:

Whole number of districts	-	-	-	-	-	1,387
Number paid during the year	-	-	-	-	-	1,273
Whole number of schools	-	-	-	-	-	8,510
Number yet required	-	-	-	-	-	674
Average number of months taught	-	-	-	-	-	5.1
Number of male teachers	-	-	-	-	-	6,972
Number of female teachers	-	-	-	-	-	3,935
Average salaries of male teachers per month	-	-	-	-	-	\$17 20
Average salaries of female teachers per month	-	-	-	-	-	\$10 15
Number of male scholars	-	-	-	-	-	233,392
Number of female scholars	-	-	-	-	-	190,952
Number learning German	-	-	-	-	-	11,041
Average number of scholars in each school	-	-	-	-	-	40
Cost of teaching each scholar per month	-	-	-	-	-	\$1 44
Amount of tax levied	-	-	-	-	-	\$768,422 07
Amount received from State appropriation	-	-	-	-	-	159,367 44
Cost of instruction	-	-	-	-	-	609,377 45
Fuel and contingencies	-	-	-	-	-	63,329 14
Cost of school houses, purchasing, building, renting, and repairing,	-	-	-	-	-	253,741 06

The following table exhibits the comparative progress of the system in its main features, since its establishment in 1835:

COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE SYSTEM SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN 1835.

SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

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Year.	Whole number of districts.	No. of districts accepting.	No. of districts paid.	No. of districts reported.	Whole No. of schools.	Time schools were opened.	Whole No. of teachers.	Average salaries of male teachers per month.	Average salaries of female teachers per month.	Whole No. of scholars.	Average No. in each school.	Average cost of teaching each scholar, per quarter.	State appropriation to districts accepting.	Tax levied in the accepting districts.	Expense for school houses.	Expense for instruction, fuel, and contingencies.	No. of taxables as returned by the county commissioners, 1812, 1818, and 1850.
1835,	907	536	603	156	762	3 mo., 12d.	508	\$18 34	\$11 96	32,514	41	\$1 12	Unknown.	\$207,105 37	\$111,803 01	\$103,972 90	
1836,	987	745	765	573	3,284	4 "	3,394	18 89	11 79	139,604	42	1 06	\$98,670 51	231,552 36	202,230 52	493,071 29	
1837,	1,001	796	820	664	4,089	5 "	4,841	18 95	11 30	182,355	44	1 27	463,749 55	385,788 00	149,132 23	560,450 69	
1838,	1,033	861	820	628	3,939	5 "	5,034	18 95	11 30	174,732	41	1 39	323,794 92	385,788 00	149,132 23	560,450 69	
1839,	1,050	879	857	633	3,152	5 "	4,666	19 39	12 03	181,913	41	1 36	276,896 92	382,527 89	161,384 06	579,162 78	
1840,	1,050	879	867	632	3,152	5 "	4,666	19 39	12 03	181,913	41	1 36	276,896 92	382,527 89	161,384 06	579,162 78	
1841,	1,072	902	885	734	3,179	5 "	7,686	18 91	11 45	227,699	44	1 26	249,100 84	397,952 01	123,061 19	524,318 66	
1842,	1,113	905	905	861	6,116	5 "	7,494	18 58	11 16	281,085	44	1 27	250,065 00	398,766 40	119,006 74	489,872 58	303,183
1843,	1,139	945	945	865	6,156	5 "	7,594	17 51	11 06	288,762	45	1 21	272,720 09	419,307 61	92,749 01	484,454 12	
1844,	1,172	939	939	816	5,993	5 "	7,585	16 88	10 41	288,402	44	1 15	261,520 00	331,340 63	75,918 91	470,228 36	
1845,	1,189	1,012	1,018	961	6,690	4 "	8,031	16 47	9 46	327,418	44	1 25	195,813 41	370,744 15	77,173 28	375,082 23	
1846,	1,225	1,067	1,056	994	7,096	5 "	8,168	16 09	9 92	339,805	45	1 23	186,417 86	406,740 43	60,960 67	486,475 71	
1847,	1,249	1,105	1,051	1,018	7,320	4 "	8,674	16 73	10 20	331,967	45	1 26	187,269 50	436,727 80	60,410 82	487,211 51	
1848,	1,330	1,330	1,129	1,078	7,815	4 "	9,096	17 37	10 65	360,605	44	1 36	193,633 75	501,681 17	96,539 47	505,505 97	460,752
1849,	1,344	1,218	1,218	1,194	8,287	4 "	10,050	17 47	10 32	385,175	43	1 42	182,883 55	553,187 43	146,114 14	562,930 85	
1850,	1,387	1,273	1,273	1,194	8,510	5 "	10,907	17 20	10 15	421,314	40	1 41	186,763 91	708,422 07	233,741 06	609,377 45	499,395

NOTE.—The triennial return of taxables for the year 1845 is omitted in this table, for the reason that it embraces the taxables in the *accepting districts* only.

Complaints are heard from various quarters, that the system has failed to accomplish the purposes for which it was designed, and that the funds of the State are wasted. These expressions of dissatisfaction must not be ascribed entirely to ignorance and prejudice; they come, in too many instances, from honest, intelligent citizens, true friends of education.

Incapacity of teachers is the principal subject of complaint. The board of directors of each school district is vested with the power of appointing the teachers; and the opinion seems to prevail with some directors, that almost any applicant is competent to instruct the *younger* children in the commencement of their education. How fatal the error! Of all others, this is the period of life and of the pupilage of a child, when the greatest injury results from improper instruction; when, the tender mind first unfolding its faculties to receive instruction, impressions of whatever character are most lasting. "No unskilful hand should play upon the harp, where the tones are forever left in the strings."

Incapacity of teachers must continue to be a fruitful source of complaint, and a great obstacle to the prosperity of the system, so long as a majority of the schools shall be kept open only a few months in each year. Teaching is an art, as well as a science; and to arrive at proficiency, requires both study and practice: it is an irksome and a laborious pursuit, and no one can be expected to engage in it cordially, unless adequately compensated. We cannot expect young men of talent to expend the time and money necessary to qualify them for this business, unless it will afford more adequate compensation, and permanent employment. The precarious character of the occupation is compelling many of our most useful and skilful teachers to turn their attention to other pursuits, and seek a livelihood in other channels. When the labors of the teacher are properly remunerated, and means devised to keep the schools in operation the greater part of the year, we may expect able men to adopt teaching as a permanent profession. In the examination of the capacity and general qualifications of the applicant for employment, the law requires the boards of directors to examine also into his *moral* character. It is complained that this part of their duty is too frequently neglected; and that men of corrupt principles and immoral habits are employed as teachers, who pollute the minds of the young, and thus inflict serious injury upon society. The mischief perpetrated, is charged upon the common school system, and good men become prejudiced against it, as though these evils were inseparable from it. "A teacher should himself be taught; he should be educated for the profession of teacher, with at least as great care as is required in other occupations and professions. He should not only be acquainted with the rudiments of English education, and the best mode of imparting instruction to the pupil, but he should be disciplined in sound morals, in correct habits, and in the control of his own passions, before his instruction to the scholar can be useful."

It is a culpable waste of the money of the people to expend it for the pernicious services of men "who cannot teach, and will not learn."

You may provide any amount of money for educational purposes: you may expend it in the erection of school houses, and in the establishment of schools without number: you may fill the school houses with scholars, and provide the scholars with books: still your legislation will prove profitless, unless provision is made to secure the services of properly-qualified teachers.

How are these evils to be remedied? In submitting "plans for the improvement of the system," as the law requires, the superintendent is aware that any proposition intended to effect substantial alterations, should be regarded with much caution. Frequent changes in the law, where so many are concerned in the execution of its provisions, create confusion. Hence, suggestions, apparently the wisest and most judicious, to remedy alleged defects, have generally, in the judgment of the Legislature, failed to be entirely free from objection.

To remove complaints and secure more efficiency to the system, a plan which is regarded as practicable, and involving little additional expense, is recommended. It is the appointment of a superintendent of each Congressional district, for a term of

years, with an adequate salary. The appointment of the district superintendent should be made by some authority within the district, competent, from a knowledge of the citizens thereof, to make a selection of some gentleman whose known zeal in the cause of popular education, whose sound moral character, general intelligence, energy, and activity, would designate him as a proper person to discharge the trust.

The duties of the superintendent would consist in the establishment and supervision of a teachers' seminary, for thorough instruction in the common school branches alone, and in the science and art of imparting instruction to others. A model-school might be attached to each seminary, and such students of the seminary as might be approved as teachers in the model-school, should be charged no tuition fee, while others might be required to pay a small amount quarterly. The superintendent might exercise a general supervision over the schools of his district, deliver public lectures on subjects connected with common school studies, teaching, &c., advise with committees, assist in the examination of teachers, receive and properly distribute the school fund throughout his district, select and distribute the most approved books for the schools, determine, or report disputes to the State Superintendent, take care that the school tax is properly assessed and collected, and prevent frauds upon the State in the disbursement of the school fund. He could also receive the reports of his district, and make a condensed semi-annual or annual report to the School Department, with which he could also maintain a direct correspondence on all matters of interest or difficulty in his district. The locality of the seminary might be changed every year, or oftener, by removal to such parts of the district whereof the citizens, by furnishing suitable rooms for its accommodation, or by other inducements, might indicate their appreciation of its benefits and importance.

Such seminaries, it is believed, can be established and supported at a trifling expense; and through their instrumentality, much of the fund now annually squandered in the support of schools, which the intelligent citizen can neither commend nor patronize, be saved to the State, and advantageously employed.

If we would correct the evils of the system, we must begin at the foundation. We can never have *good schools* until we have provided *good teachers*. No one animated with an enlightened patriotism, would object even to taxation, were it necessary to accomplish this object. On its fulfilment depends the success of popular instruction; and, as a consequence, the welfare of the citizen, and the prosperity of the State.

The organization and successful management of these seminaries in every Congressional district of the State, would be attended with the most beneficial results to the system. It might not, perhaps, be calculating wildly to say, that they would save a large proportion of the cost of their establishment, by giving to the school fund a proper direction, and rendering it effective for the purposes for which it was created, instead of being, in many instances, misused, misappropriated, or perhaps squandered. Under an auspicious public confidence, they would make teaching a *permanent* occupation, by elevating its character, and creating and inspiring a professional feeling among teachers, and an enthusiastic attachment to their profession.

For the improvement of the system, certain alterations of the law are also recommended.

The simplest, most direct, and least expensive method of collecting the school tax should be adopted. Upon the aid derived from this source depends much of the efficacy of the system; and it should be made to yield all that can be anticipated from it, with the least possible expense and delay. That part of the law, relating to the collection of the tax, should be so altered as to require the delivery of the duplicate, in all cases, under certain penalties and restrictions, to the collector of the county rates and levies, instead of to the District Treasurer. The collection of the tax would thus be simplified, and the difficulty attendant upon the refusal of the constable to receive a partially collected duplicate from the treasurer, avoided.

A reduction of the number of directors, from six to three, would also be an improvement. Their responsibility, by being less divided, would be increased, and their accountability to their constituents more fully realized and appreciated.

In the selection of sites for school houses difficulties frequently arise, in conse-

quence of the refusal of the owner of the *fee* to convey a title to the Board of Directors, thereby compelling them to build on short leases, or verbal agreements, which often result in disputes and in loss to the district. To remedy this evil, authority given to directors to locate houses in their respective districts, in such situations as would best promote the interests of the sub-districts, and providing for any damage sustained by the owner of the property, in the same manner as is now required by law in like cases, would be wise and salutary in its effects.

These suggestions are respectfully commended to the favorable consideration of the Legislature.

In the city and county of Philadelphia, the system of Public Schools differs in some important features, and, in its organization, is separate and distinct from the general system. The present gratifying condition of these schools, and the admirable character of their organization, may be learned from the following extract from a late able report of a "Special Committee of the County Board on Public Schools :"

"In the performance of their duty, they have visited the different classes of schools in our city and county, beginning with the Primary, and ending with the High School; and, through the kindness of the instructors, have seen the scholars go through their various exercises. With all these schools they have been extremely gratified; the scholars, apparently impressed with the advantages they enjoy, bring a cheerful and willing mind to the tasks allotted to them, while the teachers, having by our system been *taught to teach*, perform their duties in a manner which nothing but a *thorough previous training* could give. The extensive employment of females, as teachers, seems an admirable arrangement, opening, as it does, a new and appropriate occupation for woman, and greatly reducing the expense of tuition. Their patience and winning manners lead the gentle and repress the boisterous; while those who would struggle the most against the control of strength seem almost unconsciously to yield to the power of weakness. The mode in which the expenditures are made, and the accounts kept, was also exhibited to your committee. In this they can suggest no improvement; it is clear, precise, and satisfactory."

The Annual Report of the Board of Controllers of these schools will doubtless be laid before you at an early day, and will furnish information of their progress and present condition.

In addition to the usual aggregate or county table, a district table of teachers, scholars, revenue, expenditures, &c., has been annexed to this report. Embracing all the statistics furnished the department by the district reports, and exhibiting the operations of the system in the several school districts of each county of the State, it will afford more minute and satisfactory information than could be derived from any general statement.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The history of education, from the most remote period of antiquity, shows the deep interest with which wise rulers regarded the establishment of schools among their subjects, and that no government, destitute of their illuminating influence, was ever long perpetuated. In ancient Greece and Rome, schools were intimately connected with government, and supported by its fostering care. China, that wonderful government, noted for its antiquity, and which has for so many centuries wielded despotic sway over the one-fourth of the population of the habitable globe, sustains its authority throughout its wide domains chiefly through the influence of schools. Into her schools large numbers of the youth of the empire are brought, that, by severe discipline and critical examination, the highest order of talent may be discovered and selected for the public service. In later times, the most enlightened governments and distinguished statesmen have been the patrons of education. The most powerful governments of Europe have turned their attention to the support of schools as a means of self-preservation. If, then, established absolute monarchies and despotisms

of the old world admit the necessity of educating their subjects, for the preservation of law and order, of how much greater importance is a system of general education to a Republic, in the youth of its national existence, where sovereign power is lodged in the people, and where *popular* opinion wields a controlling influence.

The political trusts and responsibilities of the State must soon pass, with accumulated importance, into the hands of those who are now the *children* of the State. Of what incalculable value, then, and how worthy the fostering care of government, should that system of education be regarded which is designed to train these future guardians of the institutions and liberties of the country for the discharge of the responsible duties which await them. Will the State forget her best interests, by failing to exert her whole ability in properly educating those who are soon to direct and control her destinies?

In our towns, and in the secluded valleys of our State, may be found bright gems of native intellect, unconscious of their slumbering powers, which the culture of education would draw forth from obscurity and elevate to a distinction that would attract the admiration of the world, and shed a lustre on the annals of the State that gave them birth. The child must know that he has powers before he can feel the importance of improving them. He discovers something of his ability in the school where he measures his intellectual strength with his fellows. "If circumstances do not make the man, they afford him the means to make himself."

Educate the masses, and millions of acres of our unimproved lands will be fertilized, the barren wilderness turned into fruitful fields, smiling with plenty, and many of our hills, now waste and unproductive, will be clothed with verdure, and yield a rich reward for the labor of cultivation. A general diffusion of knowledge has always proved highly conducive to the *wealth* of a country. It rouses the slumbering energies of the people, and imparts a vigor and activity which enables them to employ more skill in the useful arts; the popular mind receives an impetus which carries it forward to the achievement of mighty enterprises and important discoveries, all tending to promote the happiness and the pecuniary prosperity of the community.

The statistics of the most enlightened nations exhibit a remarkable increase of wealth within a few years, as the result of improvements in the application of science to the mechanic arts. England, by the aid of science, with no more operatives than France, is said to produce in the value of her manufactures, as much as France would do with six millions more added to her manufacturing population. The inexhaustible and incalculably valuable mineral wealth embedded in our own native hills, would never have seen the light of day, had not the eye of science discovered it, and the skill of science converted it to useful and profitable purposes.

Our system of education, which opens a *free school* to the children of all classes, is a system of comparatively modern invention; the advantages and benefits of which are chiefly confined to the Northern and Eastern States, and to a few countries in Europe. To the early settlers of New England belong, I believe, the credit and the honor of its origin. To the success of the experiment of self-government, the education of the people was wisely esteemed an essential pre-requisite.

For many years some of the States have sustained these schools with increasing interest, while others have lately adopted the system with encouraging success. In many of the States where no system of popular education has yet been adopted, a spirit of inquiry appears to be starting up, affording a gratifying assurance of a more general appreciation of its importance, and justifying the hope that the day is not distant when, by the patronizing influence of every State of this great confederacy, such a system of universal education will be recognized as cannot fail to contribute to the national reputation and prosperity.

In this Commonwealth, the success of the experiment has surpassed the anticipations of its most sanguine friends; but the few years of its practical operation have not, as yet, fully developed results which may be expected to flow from its influence. Difficulties were to be expected in the commencement of a system with which the people had little acquaintance, and against which stubborn prejudices existed. These difficulties have been met by government with a laudable disposition to correct the

evils attending the system, and to render it efficient in accomplishing the purposes for which it was established.

Whenever our educational system shall have attained that perfection to which we are competent to bring it, it will open new fields of profitable employment in every department of industry, and retain within our borders the population and wealth now annually seeking other homes. But if, with admitted superior advantages, we fail to sustain our institutions for the improvement of society, communities more provident will soon outstrip us in education and refinement, and offer still stronger inducements to draw away the young and enterprising citizen, and the capital, so necessary to our pecuniary prosperity.

Let us send out the school-master to every corner of our State, that he may wake up dormant mind, open the fountains of knowledge, teach the young to slake their thirst in its healthful streams, and learn to live for God and for their country. Let us properly sustain the schools for all classes. Let the young be taught to fear God and keep his commandments, to honor their parents, to love their country, and respect her laws; and we shall find in the affections of a grateful, intelligent, and educated people, the surest defence of liberty, the firmest bulwark of national safety.

I might with propriety here close this report; but as a subject to which the Superintendent of Common Schools may properly invite the attention of the Legislature, I desire to submit a project of an institution, allied to them in its nature and importance, —a State institution for special instruction in the theory and practice of agriculture, and for general instruction in all the branches of a high school course.

It is worthy of remark, that while the least useful arts practised in towns, have reached a point of perfection which seems to limit further advances, the art of agriculture, the most ancient, noble, and necessary of all arts, is the least generally understood in proportion to its susceptibility of improvement. These facts are inevitably traced in the one instance to the association, and, therefore, to the reciprocal enlightenment of mechanics, and in the other, to the isolation, and, therefore, to the unaided intelligence of farmers. Genius, by the means and opportunities afforded in dense communities, has been enabled to experiment upon every material, and every agent contributing to the wants and luxuries of life. But in rural solitude it has lacked these encouragements for its devotion to the business of extracting sustenance from the earth. And even when, by its intuitive perceptions, or through long observation, it has obtained knowledge of the highest moment, such knowledge must, in countless instances, have died with its possessors, because they cared not to impart it, or because they found no apt recipients of it. Nature's secrets, investigated amid the bustle of city streets, where not a blade of grass can pierce the pavement, have come of late years to the rescue of failing harvests, and men who may not have known a grain of wheat from a grain of rye, have taught how either would multiply a hundred fold, where neither would grow before. A new science has shed fertilizing light upon primitive deserts and exhausted fields; and the dreams of alchemy can now be fulfilled in a better than the literal sense, with the riches into which agricultural chemistry may convert the poorest clod. Thus, the vocation of the farmer is beginning to assert a new dignity, as it increases its drafts upon the funds of science and experience. Its principles, and the application of them, have become a matter of systematic study, and may rightfully take precedence, for the great majority of the rising generation, of many branches of education heretofore deemed of first importance.

With these simple facts in view, there should be no necessity for enlarging upon the duty of an enlightened government, to extend every possible facility to the advancement of agricultural science. In our own State, we already witness a cheering step in this direction, in the project recommended by the Executive in his annual message to the Legislature, for the creation of a State Agricultural Department; and also in the present effort, on the part of some of her most enlightened citizens, to form a State Agricultural Society. The establishment of a National Agricultural Bureau, recommended by the President of the United States, in his message at the opening of the present session of Congress, points to another aid which this great interest is about to receive. The bequest of several millions of dollars, recently made for the establish-

ment of an Agricultural School in Maryland, is evidence of the importance attached, by a singularly sagacious mind, to such an institution, as the means of diffusing correct knowledge of the subject. The rich Commonwealth of Pennsylvania should certainly be no longer backward in doing that for her children, which the legacy of a single individual promises to accomplish for those of her sister, Maryland.

The project now presented to the consideration of the Legislature, involves many details, which it is not requisite to mention in this first draft of its general outlines. To show its feasibility and importance is the present purpose.

It is proposed that an institution be founded large enough for the instruction of not less than five hundred pupils at a time, in the branches of a general education, and especially in agriculture, theoretically, and practically. Of the pupils, three hundred may be supported at the expense of the State, and two hundred at their personal cost. The State pupils might be selected from every county, in the ratio of three pupils for each member of the House of Representatives, the selection to be determined by the standing of the candidates in the common schools, so that admission to the State institution should be the highest reward of merit. The two hundred other pupils, it is assumed, would be sent by parents or guardians, and paid for as at any boarding-school, the profit on the latter class diminishing the expense of the former. The term of instruction for the State pupils should be not less than six years, commencing about the age of twelve years. After the organization would be completed, and the system in regular operation, fifty pupils would, therefore, enter, and fifty be discharged every year. For the paying pupils, some similar plan should be adopted as far as practicable.

In order to carry out this general project, I beg leave to offer the following recommendations:

1. The creation by law of a board of three Regents of the institution, to be elected by popular vote.
2. The purchase of a body of land sufficiently large and varied in character for the exemplification of every species of husbandry.
3. The laying out of the land, and the erection and furnishing of suitable buildings for the accommodation of the pupils, professors, officers, and domestics of the institution, and for all the purposes of a great model farm.
4. The purchase of books, philosophical apparatus, farm stock, and implements of every description.
5. The appointment of eight Professors, and the requisite number of assistant teachers, in the various departments of instruction.
6. The appointment of a farm overseer, a house steward, and a matron, having the power of employing the requisite domestics in their respective departments.

On these six heads I will remark in their order—

1st. The *Board of Regents*.—It is necessary for the original organization of the institution, and for the proper direction of it, that there should be an acting body, superior in authority to its resident officers, having the same relation to it which controllers have to common schools, or trustees to colleges. The *Board of Regents* should regulate the fiscal affairs of the institution, appoint the Professors and officers, decide upon the eligibility of pupils, and generally exercise all powers incident to these. They should make, in rotation, monthly visits to the institution, and semi-annually in a body, and present to the Legislature an annual report of their transactions, and of the condition of the institution. As their efficiency would, in a great measure, depend upon their special experience, their term of office should be not less than three years. In order that each section of the State should be properly represented in the board, the Senatorial districts from the first to the ——— inclusive, the districts from the ——— to the ——— inclusive, and the districts from the ——— to the ——— inclusive, might respectively elect one Regent, in consecutive years, so that only one new member should enter the board within any one year.

2d. The *Land*.—The body of land purchased should be not less than one thousand acres, affording to all the pupils a sufficient area for the practice of tillage, after deducting space for woodlands, orchards, pleasure grounds, yards, and buildings. Its surface should be diversified by hill and meadow, adapted, in its several points, to the

best culture, not only of grain, but of vegetables and fruits, and to the raising of all kinds of stock.

3*d*. There should be a principal house, sufficiently extensive for the domestic and school accommodation of the pupils, and a certain number of the teachers, officers, and domestics; neat, but not costly dwellings, for the professors; stables and the out-houses generally of a well improved farm, and requisite for every purpose of the establishment.

In the plan of these buildings, taste, as well as strict economy, should be consulted, and each one of its kind should be a model of beautiful design as well as convenience.

4*th*. *Books, et cetera*.—Besides the books requisite for school studies, there should be a library founded, and cabinets formed in the various departments of science. The philosophical apparatus should embrace the instruments of an observatory, with a suitable building for their use.

5*th*. *Teachers*.—It is assumed that not less than eight professors, with sixteen assistants, would suffice for the various branches of instruction, and for the maintenance of discipline among the number of pupils proposed. The miscellaneous course should be so comprehensive, that the graduates of the institution might, with the single exception of the ancient languages, be on a footing with those of any university in the country, and superior in certain branches of knowledge. Its aims should be eminently practical, illustrative and promotive of the utilitarian and progressive spirit of the age.

The course of instruction is indicated in the following list of teachers:

A Professor of English Literature and Mental Philosophy, *ex officio* President of the Faculty, with two assistant teachers in the primary departments:

A Professor of General History and Political Economy, with one assistant:

A Professor of Mathematics, with two assistants:

A Professor of Practical Farming and Rural Architecture, with six assistants:

A Professor of Agricultural Chemistry, General Chemistry, Geology, and Botany, with two assistants:

A Professor of Natural Philosophy, Mechanics, and Engineering, with two assistants:

A Professor of Comparative Anatomy, and *ex-officio* Physician of the Institution.

A Professor of the German Language, with one assistant.

In this list the number of professors is eight, and of assistants sixteen. Six of the latter should be females, who are not only thoroughly competent as teachers, but whose influence on the morals and manners of boys, is essential to their proper cultivation.

6*th*. *Officers*.—The farm-overseer, house-steward, and matron, it is assumed would require twenty-two assistants and domestics for the mechanical and menial labor of the establishment.

THE FINANCIAL FEATURES OF THE PROJECT.

In estimating the original and current expenses of the institution, care has been taken to obtain reliable data. Certain items of calculation must necessarily be arbitrary, but need not exceed, it is believed, the amounts stated.

The following is an exhibit of the probable cost of founding and maintaining the establishment:

Original Outlay.

One thousand acres of land, at fifty dollars an acre - - -	\$50,000 00
Preparing the land for its purposes, and erecting all the requisite buildings, furnishing the same for domestic and instructional uses	185,000 00
Implements - - - - -	15,000 00
Total original outlay - - - - -	\$250,000 00

Current Outlay.

Interest on \$250,000 00, at 6 per cent. - - -	\$15,000 00
Salaries and travelling expenses of three Regents, and of the Secretary and Treasurer - - -	\$3,000 00
Salary of the President of the Faculty - - -	2,000 00
Salaries of seven Professors, at \$1,200 each - - -	8,400 00
Salaries of ten male Assistants, at \$500 each - - -	5,000 00
Salaries of six female Assistants, at \$300 each - - -	1,800 00
Salary of Overseer, \$500 } - - -	1,200 00
“ Steward, 400 } - - -	
“ Matron, 300 } - - -	
Salaries of five male hands, at \$200 each - - -	1,000 00
Salaries of seventeen female domestics, at \$65 each - - -	1,100 00
	<hr/>
	\$23,500 00
Maintenance (food only of pupils, teachers, officers, and domestics, 550 persons, at \$30 a year each), beside the farm produce - - -	16,500 00
Clothing of 300 State pupils, at \$35 a-year each - - -	10,500 00
Fuel, light, repairs of building, renewal of implements, furniture, &c. - - -	9,000 00
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Gross annual expenditure - - -	<u><u>\$74,500 00</u></u>

Annual Income.

Two hundred paying pupils, at \$150 a-year each - - -	30,000 00
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Total net annual cost to the State - - -	<u><u>\$44,500 00</u></u>

This sum of forty-four thousand five hundred dollars makes the average cost of each State pupil about one hundred and fifty dollars a-year. Less than this sum, for maintenance, clothing, instruction, and every contingency, it is apparent would not be a safe estimate, while the experience of several liberal institutions, the reports of which have been collated in forming it, show that, under proper management, it is an ample allowance for every purpose embraced in the scheme.

It is unnecessary to show in what manner the organization of such an institution as the one proposed may be effected, since its feasibility, with due authority and means, must be conceded. The project, as here set forth, contemplates its wants and capabilities, when in full operation; and only in this light can its merits be fairly judged. Thus viewed, we see it in fact a college, not a college in the ancient sense of the name, devoted to elegant, though chiefly theoretical learning; but a college devoted wholly to real and inevitably profitable knowledge; profitable to the recipient, not only in the discipline of his mind, and the enlargement of its powers, but profitable to his body also. The course of instruction here recommended has been made comprehensive, because no partial system can command that respect and moral support of the community necessary to the successful prosecution of the design.

The institution should be, to the gifted and ambitious boy, in the remotest district of the State, a goal worthy of his bright and daring hopes, where he should know that the winner in the race would receive, not a wreath of barren abstractions, but the golden crown of solid knowledge, and a sure passport to honor and independence in the world. So liberal should be the foundation, so thorough the system, that the alumnus of the institution might, in any profession, or any position, measure intellect and acquirements with any competitor.

As it would receive only the choice spirits of the local schools, it should be worthy of them as well as they of it. As all its seed would be sown in rich soil, the quality of that seed should be the best, its quantity the most abundant.

No attempt has been made in the foregoing exposition of the plan in question to indicate what should be the qualification for admission, the order of studies, the proportion of time devoted to agriculture proper, or the rules of discipline. These, with other matters, may be discussed fully should this skeleton project be regarded with favor. It may be remarked, however, that neither in the instructional, nor in the domestic department, could the desired results be obtained with fewer teachers, officers, or domestics. Twenty pupils are as many as one teacher can faithfully govern as well as instruct, and as many as one domestic can serve. While it is designed that the pupils should work as practical farmers, it cannot be supposed that they should spend time, precious for study, in menial offices, profitless except for the moment.

It is assumed that the institution would have two hundred paying pupils. At the terms of one hundred and fifty dollars a-year, no doubt can exist that it would be eagerly sought by a much larger number from other States, as well as our own. The salaries suggested for the professors and teachers, are presumed, without being extravagant, to be sufficient to secure talent and character of a high order in every department. The fact that the State pupils would be chosen on account of their superior standing in their home schools, would suppress the idea of *charity* in their case; and there could be no danger of any conflict of feeling, or caste, between them and the paying pupils.

These remarks will, perhaps, meet the objections to certain features of the project, which, at first view, may seem of doubtful expediency. They present but little, however, of what may be urged in its favor. In no other Atlantic State of the Union could an Agricultural School be maintained with the same advantages to the pupils as in central Pennsylvania. If we go North, the long winters are unfavorable to out-door labor; if South, the long summers equally interfere with it, and with mental application. Here, then, evidently is the choicest field for the enterprise.

The cost, were it far greater, is a trivial sum for a Commonwealth containing nearly two millions and a half of thrifty people, with not a tithe of its resources yet developed. And what means can more certainly tend to hasten their development than this? We may look through this project to a time, when in active maturity, it will annually send its honored heralds to every neighborhood in the State, bearing a treasury of knowledge and habits of industry, to pay back, who can tell how many fold, the tribute it received. The strong hand will go with the strong mind, and popular prejudices will readily yield to the practical proofs of sound theory. In other words, the institution must diffuse both the science and the art of agriculture, strengthened by general education, to make the knowledge of it available to others as well as to the possessors. It will exhibit a grand model and experimental farm, where every suggestion of ingenuity can be fairly tested. It will be a constant mart for the distribution of the choicest seeds for field or garden, and the rarest breeds of all varieties of stock. But, more materially, will it prove the economy of the concentration of capital and labor in the cultivation of the soil, in opposition to the doctrine and practice of their diffusion, which cause multitudes of our most valued citizens to seek the far West, while untold acres of our own land are unreclaimed from the primitive wilderness. Such an institution might also furnish much of the *teaching* material that, in other States, is provided at public expense in the maintenance of Normal Schools, by making it one of the conditions on which each of the three hundred State scholars is received into the institution, that after the completion of his full term therein, a certain period shall be devoted to the State in the capacity of a teacher in her Common Schools.

These are some of the expected fruits of this design. I may add further, that if the site chosen for the institution be not too distant from Harrisburg, the members of the Legislature, a large number of whom are always farmers, might witness, themselves, the highest achievements of systematic husbandry, and emulate them at home. They

could be thus assured that the bounty of the State was well employed, and, from time to time, enlarge the establishment to meet the wants of increasing population. Is not the effort due to the reputation and the hopes of our State? Massachusetts has her Harvard; Connecticut has her Yale; New Jersey has her Nassau Hall: may not Pennsylvania behold her Agricultural College, destined at no remote day, in the robustness of youth, and with none of the burdens of antiquated notions to check its progress, leaving these venerable competitors far behind in the race for honors, which the age will award only to practical knowledge?

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

A. L. RUSSELL,

Superintendent of Common Schools.

[The tables accompanying this report are worked in the first edition only. The tabular form worked first, was distributed before the receipt of the second order from the House of Representatives.]

